

VZCZCXRO3379

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN  
RUEHLZ RUEHNEH RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHSK RUEHSL RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHAH #1158 2541143  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 111143Z SEP 09  
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3450  
INFO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5658  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3376  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3240  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3901  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1136  
RHMCCU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3891  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001158

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCE/CEN; EEB  
COMMERCE FOR EHOUSE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EIND](#) [EPET](#) [EINT](#) [EINV](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN ACQUIRES TWO NEW OIL TANKERS.

¶1. (U) Sensitive But Unclassified. Not for Public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY. Turkmenistan received its second Russian-made oil tanker on September 8; the "Hazar" (Turkmen for "Caspian") was built in Krasnoye Sormovo (Novgorod), Russia. In August, the first tanker, the "Sumbar", named after the Sumbar River in Western Turkmenistan, arrived in Turkmenistan. It is expected that Turkmenistan will use these tankers for future crude oil exports. The state company Turkmenizderyayollary (Turkmen Sea and River Lines Co.), will operate the vessels, but ownership belongs to the Turkmen state oil company Turkmenneft. In the past, Turkmenistan had one oil tanker, the "Atamurad Niyazov", which reportedly was in constant need of repair from the time of delivery. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (SBU) In addition to large tankers, acquisition of speedboats and commercial ships are also under consideration by the Turkmen government. It was reported that South Korean giant Daewoo continues to offer small boats, speedboats for police use, and larger ships to the Turkmen. The recent Turkmenistan tanker purchases signify GOTX plans to diversify its oil deliveries. In addition, attention to maritime transportation and services is on the rise in Turkmenistan.

¶4. (SBU) The two oil tankers have been earmarked for domestic use and oil export. To date, Turkmenneft uses railway and truck tankers to deliver its oil exports. In terms of past tanker ships, Turkmenneft only had the "Atamurad Niyazov." This Turkish-built tanker, named after former President Niyazov's father, was not accredited by the Maritime Register of Russia, the sole regulatory body for ships in the Caspian basin. The "A. Niyazov" was used only for coastal shipments of crude from Caspian onshore oil deposits

in Ekareh, a small seaport in Western Turkmenistan, to the Turkmenbashi Oil Refinery, the largest refinery in the country. It was reported that the crew of the "A. Niyazov" stated privately that the ship had serious manufacturing defects from the time of its purchase. Moreover, the only waterway from the landlocked Caspian to the ocean is through the Volga-Don canal. Previously, Turkmenistan used this route to send its crude via foreign tankers. Embassy contacts reported that the Turkmen might try to send oil through this route in its two new tankers.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: The Turkmen government's purchase of two large oil tankers meshes with government promises to diversify its lucrative hydrocarbon sector. Time will tell if the new Russian tankers truly provide the Turkmen with more oil delivery options. END COMMENT.

CURRAN